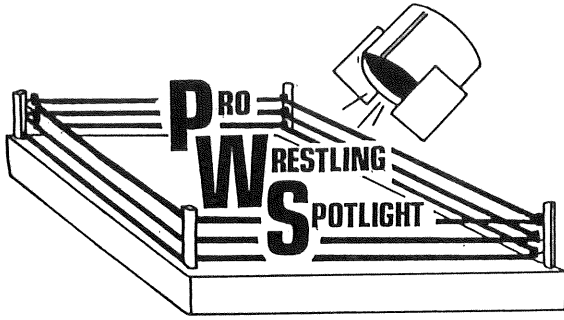




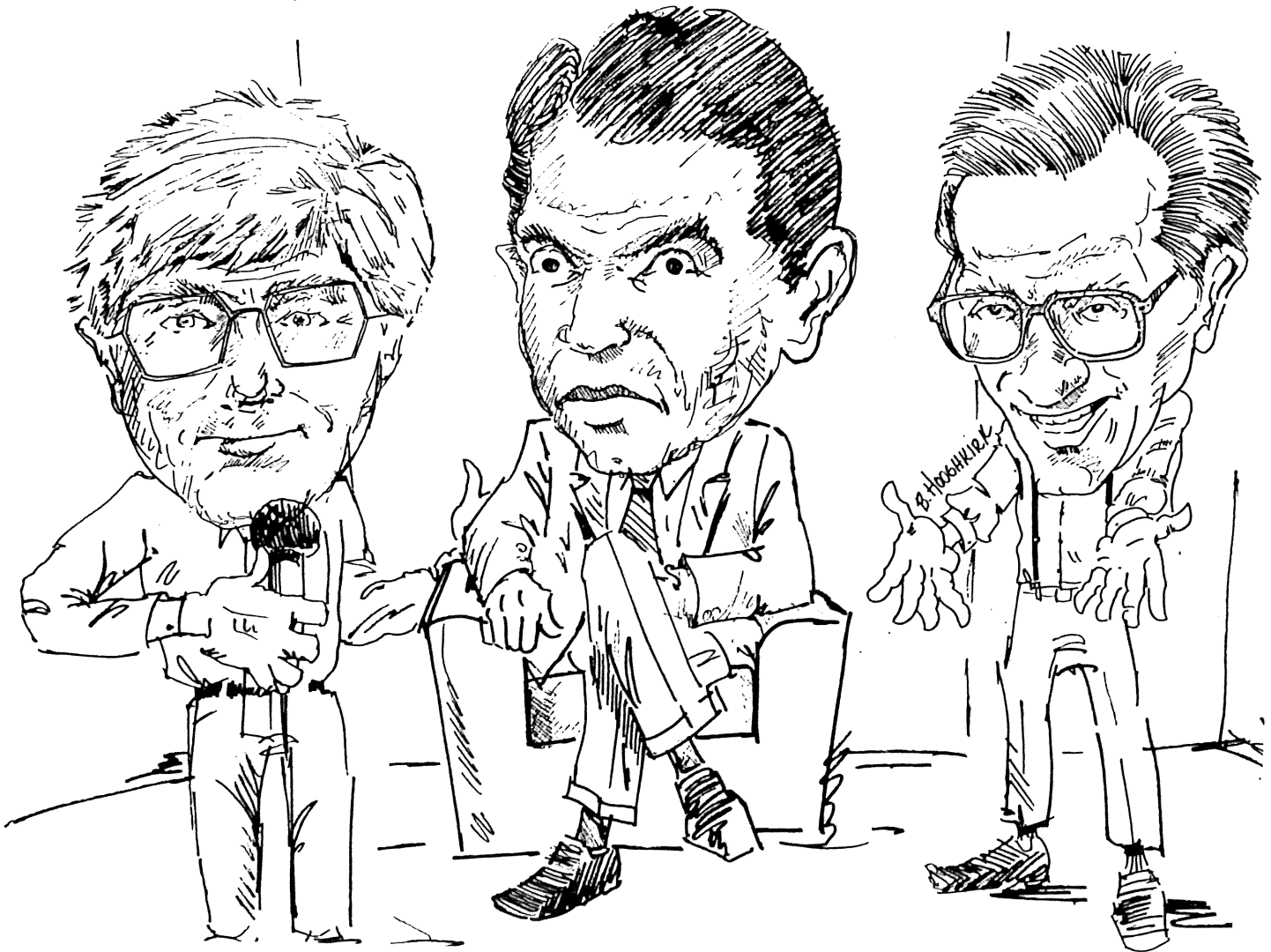
WEEKLY

MARCH 30-APRIL 6, 1992

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SHOWTIME!



VINCE MEETS THE PRESS.....

SEE PAGE 2

VINCE MEETS THE PRESS

by JOHN AREZZI

Vincent K. McMahon, CEO of the world's largest wrestling federation, the WWF, came out of Titan Towers this past week to answer a barrage of accusations regarding the conduct of former employees, VP's Pat Patterson, Terry Garvin, and ring announcer Mel Phillips, all of whom were accused of sexual misconduct.

McMahon, appearing on the nationally televised CNN program "The Larry King Show," with arch enemy Bruno Sammartino and ex-wrestler Barry Orton, addressed the recent charges of sexual harassment or molestation by Patterson and/or Garvin and Phillips.

With answers which could be construed as "errors in judgement," McMahon made the following incredible statements.

- *Mel Phillips was never a WWF employee, but rather an "occasional laborer."* Nothing could be further from the truth. Mel worked everyday for the WWF for a least 10 years.

- *No WWF wrestlers were currently on steroids.* That comment we will leave for your opinion.

- *Allegations of sexual misconduct "were a lot of bunk,"* according to McMahon. Later he said *"It could have happened."*

It goes on and on. Bruno Sammartino confronted Vince on a number of issues, sometimes losing his temper to the point of screaming at him. Bruno called Vince a pathetic liar when Vince said the former two-time WWF champion "never forgave me for firing your son, David."

With the half truths and mis-statements made by Vince, you have to wonder if these were the acts of a desperate man.

Vince also surprised a panel assembled for the Phil Donahue Show on Monday, March 16th by showing up for the taping after earlier declining to appear. Vince came to the taping with an entourage consisting of WWF executive Basil Devito, Mrs. Linda McMahon, "Miss Elizabeth" Liz Poffo, and two surprise guests, anonymous until after the taping -- The brother and the individual who was accusing WWF executives of molestation, Tom Cole. Vince had worked out an agreement with Cole the morning of the Donahue show.

Vince squared off against Bruno Sammartino, Superstar Billy Graham, Barry Orton, Murray Hodgson (the announcer who is suing the WWF on another sexual harassment charge), Tom Hainkins (an ex-wrestler who said Pat Patterson harassed him), journalist Dave Meltzer, and yours truly in a lively forty-plus-minute debate. Details of that show are elsewhere in this issue.

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RUMOR MILL

by JOHN AREZZI

Hulk Hogan has put his Tampa residence up for sale according to rumors. Hulk is moving to Hawaii, making his commute (three to six times a year) to Japan a little easier. Of course, it's pretty difficult for the main stream media to dog you if you live that far away from the mainland...**Kevin Sullivan** will not be coming back to WCW, according to executive VP K. Allen Frey...**The Star** has pulled its piece on pro wrestling because other media beat them to the story...**Rowdy Roddy Piper** is rumored to be headed out of the WWF, following the Hulkster out of Titanland. Piper wants to continue his acting career, but I feel his talents would be better utilized as a heel in the hot WCW...New York wrestling area fans are getting ready to be organized into a letter writing campaign to bring to an end the monopoly that currently exists at Madison Square Garden. As you all know only one wrestling promotion is allowed there right now. Hopefully that will end soon.

EDITORIAL

by JOHN AREZZI

There has never been a period in professional wrestling like the past few weeks. The sexual harassment scandal which became public knowledge has shocked many. What the general population found out about professional wrestling this month will most likely fade away from them over time, because they just don't care. However, the black eye this business has been given will be felt for a long time for those active in the business. It's already caused some bickering over the way Vince McMahon was interrogated on both the Larry King and Donahue shows.

There are many insiders in the wrestling business that feel Vince was not "knocked out" by the charges leveled against him and his empire--that Dave Meltzer and I were too easy on him on the Donahue show. I must strongly disagree when I hear this.

When I first heard of Tom Cole (the youngster who was going to file suit, and "settled" with McMahon the day of the Donahue show) it was seven months ago. I knew then if the story broke it would mean near disaster for the WWF. Alleged child abuse in any way, shape, or form, is a topic that strikes a nerve in the public. Back in August I had no way of contacting Cole, and did not even know if he would go public with these charges. It's a subject that is embarrassing for the victim to speak about. But just knowing that this victim was out there made me feel angry, because if there is one, most likely there are others. I made a decision to help anyone who wanted to investigate the charges.

As far as the wrestlers who were harassed sexually -- this was a topic I've also heard about over the past several months. The young guys trying to break into the WWF were the one's most in danger of "being propositioned" by the two executives (now unemployed) of TitanSports. I know several of the "jobbers" who work in the WWF. Some of the tales I'm hearing appall me. Knowing that this harassment could have gone on for years makes me sick.

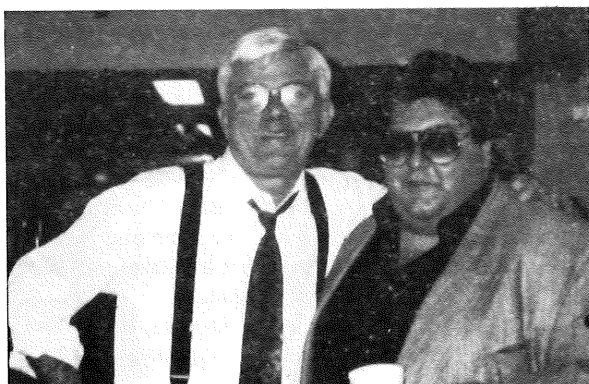
The past several months have been very hard for me. The past three weeks have been the most stressful, with this story breaking wide open. There are conversations that I have had that I can't go public with. This is a story I have been covering for half a year, even though it had not been a public one. The objective was to clean up the harassment and sexual misconduct in the WWF, not to "knock Vince out."

I must commend Murray Hodgson, Karate Kid, Lord Littlebrook, Barry Orton, Tom Harkins and unnamed others who have spoken out. Phil Mushnick deserves a ton of credit for being the only mainstream media person to dig deep from the Zahorian trial to today, exposing the evils of the #1 wrestling promotion to the nation's media and New York public. Also, Billy Graham and Bruno Sammartino deserve credit in not being afraid to speak openly. Vince Russo of PWSW should be proud for breaking the midget story ("The Midgets Stand Tall"). Dave Meltzer is someone I truly respect. His *Wrestling Observer* is a publication that is so important to this business. It angers me when I hear from people that he wasn't hard on Vince. Watch that Donahue show again. Dave was objective, and pointed out inaccuracies in Vince's statements. He did a fine job.

Vince McMahon is reeling today. No, he is not "knocked out," but he is on the run. He is painfully aware that any other skeletons in his company's closets could be even more devastating to him. He must also keep a watchful eye on his operation, more than ever before. From the drug abuse, to the alleged sexual harassment, Vince must run a real tight ship from now on.

I feel proud knowing that I had a part in bringing an end to the abuse of children and the unfair intimidation of young wrestlers in the locker room. Everyone who spoke out can feel good about that. Our purpose was not to "knock Vince McMahon out" It was to knock out the abuse of innocent victims. And that has been accomplished.

So for, those who criticize an appearance on a one-hour show, with 40-minutes of actual air time, on a panel which was filled with those who had precious few moments to make a point, consider the months of painful work it took to expose what was going on. Look at the big picture. Vince McMahon is a smart man. Appearing on the Larry King Show and Donahue must have made him sick, as well it should. He did not want to be there. I wish I didn't have to participate in being of the reasons he was there. But, I would do it again in a split second if I knew it would help right a wrong. I just want a better wrestling industry.



DIARY OF A MAD MAN

by JOHN AREZZI

The past month has been an incredible time to cover pro wrestling. The past two weeks have been unbelievable. In this article, I'm going to try to give you a feel about what was going on in my life, as I was on the "inside," covering the unfolding events of the WWF sex scandal. The story begins in July of last year.

July 1991 - Vince McMahon's crack PR department fails to invite the wrestling media to a major press conference announcing TitanSports new anabolic steroid policy. I am the only wrestling journalist in attendance, "sneaking" in under an assumed name. I am contacted by Phil Mushnick of the New York Post because I have a tape of the entire press conference. Mushnick had published the first true mainstream media piece about the steroid issue and Zahorian trial on July 12th. Mushnick is outraged by the wrestling media's exclusion by the WWF, and even more angered by other mainstream reporters' "puff" stories on McMahon's steroid policy.

August 2, 1991 - A scathing article on the WWF, its press conference and press manipulation is published in the New York Post.

August 3, 1991 - An unidentified ex-WWF ring boy calls the New York Post to tell his story.

August 15, 1991 - Steve Planamenta calls to invite me to a tour of Titan Towers and "an hour with Vince McMahon."

August 23, 1991 - Dave Meltzer, Wade Keller, yours truly and four other wrestling "journalists" meet with Vince. No one is on steroids, we are told by the man. Vince also says he was unaware that the wrestling media was uninvited to his press conference.

January 5, 1992 - David Shults and Superstar Billy Graham appear on the Pro Wrestling Spotlight with the most damaging comments leveled at Hulk Hogan and Vince McMahon to date.

January 9, 1992 - Phil Mushnick devotes his column to the Shults and Graham comments in the most explosive newspaper article yet on the WWF.

February 26, 1992 - Mushnick writes about charges of sexual abuse of former WWF ring boys. This column triggers the nation's media, many of which were preparing their own stories of the weird world of the WWF.

March 2, 1992 - Vince McMahon accepts the resignation of vice presidents Pat Patterson and Terry Garvin. The "suspension" of Mel Phillips shortly follows.

March 4, 1992 - Mushnick beats the mainstream reporters by writing about the Patterson and Garvin resignations. He is first to break the news. The explosion of mainstream media coverage is just a week away.

March 1-9, 1992 - My phone begins ringing more than ever. Each night wrestling insiders, journalists, and mainstream media professionals call to compare notes, speculate and wonder what will happen when the s--t hits the fan.

I'm visited by a WWF jobber, defending Terry Garvin. I invite him on my program. He declines. People Magazine calls looking for photos. "Now It Can Be Told" had been calling for two weeks digging for information. The CBS Evening News calls and sets a lunch date for March 13th to discuss a feature they are doing called "Eye on America". And, I'm trying to raise money to pay for my

radio show, as always. I tell Dave Meltzer "the mainstream media are like sharks, feeding on a corpse."

March 10, 1992 - Irv Muchnick (no relation to Phil) of the Village Voice (also co-author of the People Magazine story) writes about Murray Hodgson, the announcer suing the WWF for wrongful termination of employment and sexual harassment. I'm told the San Diego Union-Tribune story will be published tomorrow. "Brace yourself, here we go," I tell Meltzer.

March 11, 1992 - The San Diego story comes out (read the entire article elsewhere in this issue). I receive a call from Michael Shain of the New York Post requesting an interview.

March 12, 1992 - The L.A. Times runs their Hulk Hogan expose. The New York Post written article headlined on the front page and appearing opposite the most widely read page in the paper "page 6" is published. The mainstream media calls do not stop. Channel II, WPIX, is the first to call. "Can we interview you at 2 pm." "Sure," I say. WNBC-TV, Philadelphia Evening Magazine, CBS Evening News, Ed Glavine of the Donahue show, and CNN's Larry King Show all follow. I give Larry King's producer Bruno Sammartino's phone number. I go home numb!

March 13, 1992 - Ed Glavine calls from Donahue. I'm booked for Monday's show. Dave Meltzer calls to tell me he's coming to New York. He, Barry Orton and Billy Graham will be in the studio live Sunday for my radio show. Vince Russo informs me the midgits will go on the show Sunday as well. Lunch with CBS-TV at Mickey Mantle's restaurant. They are shocked when I give them a synopsis of what has been going on. They agree to send a camera crew to film my entire show on Sunday evening. The Larry King Show airs with the first live confrontation between Bruno Sammartino and Vince McMahon, who should have been introduced as Pinocchio. Among his statements were that Mel Phillips worked only as an occasional laborer, that Hodgson had never worked for the WBF, and that no WWF wrestlers were on steroids. Bruno was overanxious, just too hungry for this opportunity, but put Vince in his place several times. Barry Orton was also on via telephone, but unable to effectively participate in the program due to being on a seven-second delayed hook up.

March 14, 1992 - I confirm Bruno, Billy Jack Hayes, Billy Graham, Lord Littlebrook, Karate Kid, Barry Orton and Dave Meltzer for the Sunday, March 15th PWS radio show.

March 15, 1992 - On the PWS radio show Billy Graham accuses Vince McMahon of "fondling his arm in a sexual manner" in 1986. Karate Kid accuses Pat Patterson of sexual advances, Lord Littlebrook accuses the WWF of no longer using midgits again after the Karate Kid-Patterson incident, Billy Jack Hayes tells the audience about a nightmarish trip with Hulk Hogan among other accusations leveled at the WWF, Barry Orton is much more specific with his accusations and feelings on sexual harassment. It is the most explosive show to date.

March 16, 1992 - A limo picks me up at 1 pm to take me to the Donahue studios. I am the second person to arrive at the NBC studios. Murray Hodgson is the first. As I introduce myself to Murray an assistant comes in and informs us that Vince McMahon, who had previously

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declined the invitation, will indeed be there as a guest. Vince would only accept if David Shults would be excluded. Bruno shows up next, he is elated that Vince will be there. Tom Harkins comes in, followed by Barry O, Billy Graham and Dave Meltzer. "So, you're Meltzer," Bruno says as he shakes Dave's hand at their first face to face meeting. It's an historic day, is the only feeling I have. About ten minutes before air time Phil Donahue comes into our "green room" with Vince McMahon in tow. Donahue introduces himself and goes over the ground rules of the show. "How you doing guys," meekly says McMahon. There is no response from anyone, but the tension in the room speaks for itself. I'm standing shoulder to shoulder with Vince and you can feel his nervous energy. He is uneasy. The producer gets the first guests, Vince, Hodgson, Harkins and Orton for segment number one, a round table discussion.

Bruno, Graham, Dave and I watch the round table discussion with interest. A soda flies at the monitor in the "green room". McMahon against Hodgson was better than any Pay Per View I have ever seen. Murray ate Vince for lunch. Vince is soundly defeated in his debate with Murray over his termination in the WBF.

A panel is assembled for segment number two. Initially Bruno was to be seated next to Vince, but, refused, saying he would not be responsible for his actions if he had to sit next to McMahon.

McMahon finally admitted that "the possibility of sexual harassment in the WWF existed," something he flatly denied on Larry King. He also said Mel Phillips was someone "who wasn't actually an employee, although he did work with us almost every day." Huh? I confronted Vince about Hulk's Arsenio Hall appearance, asking him if he said he was "devastated" by Hulk's comments on Arsenio? Vince denied saying he was devastated, until Dave Meltzer told him, "That's the word you used to me, Vince," which drew a response from the crowd.

Billy Graham and Bruno were confrontational, as expected. The overall feeling was that Vince came out of it not as invulnerable as he usually appears to be, but not 100% a beaten man either. Vince leaves the studio with his wife Linda, Miss Elizabeth, Basil Devito, and two youngsters, later identified as Tom Cole and his brother. Later that night I learned that Vince settled with Cole for \$70,000 plus the return of his job.

March 17, 1992 - The word spreads about the Cole settlement. Muchnick calls and is outraged, he plans

another column.

March 18, 1992 - I appear on the Bill Mazer Morning Show on WEVD-AM and the Z-100 morning show. I am interviewed by Philadelphia Evening Magazine for a piece to air on March 26th.

March 20, 1992 - I am interviewed by "News of the World" newspaper in England.

March 21, 1992 - I appear on the Pro Wrestling Today TV show with Steve Mueller.

March 22, 1992 - I finish this diary, hoping that some good has come from all of this, and wondering what the next day will bring for the wrestling business.

THE MIDGETS STAND TALL

by VINCE RUSSO

I remember as a child, my grandfather calling me into the living room to watch the midgets wrestle. What a joy it was for the entire family. These midgets weren't just comedic geniuses, they were some of the greatest athletes in the world. As years passed, and I grew older, I remember always taking time out to watch the midgets. It was such a special and unique attraction. There was just something about it -- something that always made me stop and watch.

Who can forget Wrestlemania III, five years ago. The single most humorous moment in the history of the WWF took place when the big behemoth King Kong Bundy slammed pint-sized Little Beaver to the canvas. I cried out with laughter. I've never forgotten that moment. To this day I replay that match, I've even shared it with my children a few times. Now that was truly one of the greatest moments in Wrestlemania history.

But this is 1992. We haven't seen the midgets in some five years. Why? Midget wrestling never lost its magic. Why aren't my children given the opportunity to see these extraordinary and rare athletes. This is a question I wanted answered. I just wanted to know **why**. If true, what you are about to read my friends is a very sad story. A story that can only make this writer shake his head in disbelief.

At the ripe young age of 23 a young man named Chris Duke went to the Oakland Coliseum to enjoy a card of professional wrestling. After seeing the midgets wrestle, Duke decided that this is what he wanted to do. Following the show Chris spoke to Roger Brook a.k.a. Lord Littlebrook, and asked what it took to become a midget wrestler. Littlebrook told Duke what he had to do, and immediately Chris moved out to Missouri and studied under the veteran Littlebrook. The training started in August of 1986, and continued on for some two years. During his training, Chris Duke was given the name, "The Karate Kid."

The Karate Kid was blossoming as a wrestler, and soon found himself in the World Wrestling Federation, working under Lord Littlebrook. He had only worked for them on one or two occasions before an incident occurred that would change Chris Duke's life, and the future of all midget wrestlers.

"We were doing a show somewhere on the East Coast," Duke said. "I was in the dressing room as Pat Patterson entered. (It is to be noted that Patterson was the booker at the time.) Pat was shaking everybody's

hand, I was the last one. I had heard about the man before. I was kidded by the boys, they were saying Pat's gonna like you, and watch out, he's gonna flip for you. Everybody knew what he stood for. So when he came up to shake my hand I was real nervous. One of the reasons that I was nervous was because this man had been my idol. He came up to shake my hand, and he put his finger in the middle of my palm. He then rubbed my palm. Basically putting a pass on me. I just let go of his hand, I was real nervous. This happened a couple of times, whenever he shook my hand he would do that. I'm not that way and it bothered me."

"Pat was messing with him in the dressing room, playing around with him," said Littlebrook. "Shit man, if a broad's coming on to you in a bar, you don't have to be too stupid to find out she's coming on to you. The kid was a nervous wreck. I called Pat to one side and I said, 'Pat, lay off the kid. The kids a F----- nervous wreck.' Patterson said, 'Oh Roger, I'm not making any sexual advances to him. I just think he's so cute. I just like to play with him.' I said, 'Come on Pat, we've known each other too long for this. He doesn't like to play your games.' He (Patterson) seemed like he was really hurt. Well, naturally, if a broad turned me down I'd be hurt too."

"After Pat realized that I wasn't going to go that way they harassed me," added Duke. "That night before I took my EKG I drank a big cup of coke, and a big cup of coffee. While the doctor examined me he asked if I had been drinking coffee or soda in the dressing room. I explained to him that I had one cup of each. He then said that's probably the reason my EKG was different, it was up and down. He then added that if he pointed my test out to the commission they wouldn't let me wrestle. I told him that I also had a heart murmur and that an irregular heartbeat was normal for me. The doctor listened to my story, and that night I was allowed to wrestle."

"Following that incident, Pat Patterson started a rumor that I was using cocaine. He told Littlebrook, 'Your midget is on cocaine.' A couple of days later they wouldn't let me wrestle, they said I was on drugs. I was only allowed to stand on the apron during the match. I was not allowed to be tagged into the ring."

I think at this point it is important to add that a drug test was **never** administered to the Karate Kid. The story goes on...

"Pat Patterson told me that the Karate Kid couldn't work tonight," commented Littlebrook. 'Do you know if he's on cocaine or not?' Patterson asked me. 'I thought it was a joke,' remarked Littlebrook. I said, 'Come on Pat. I thought it was a rib from the night before.' I said, 'You've got to be kidding me, he's not on cocaine!' 'Well, the doctor thinks so,' Patterson answered. 'You are serious aren't you, Pat?' answered Littlebrook. 'Yes,' replied Patterson. 'The doctor thinks he's on cocaine with no test or nothing?' 'Bullshit Pat,' fired Littlebrook.

Littlebrook then told Patterson, "Let me tell you something. I've got four children, if I thought for one damn second that that boy was on drugs, especially cocaine, you think I'd allow him in my home around my children?"

"They said I couldn't work again unless I put myself into a hospital," said Duke. "I went back home and had

tests taken. I stayed in the hospital for three days. My doctor said I was perfectly fit to wrestle. I mailed all the test results to Vince McMahon along with a letter in which I mentioned that Pat Patterson tried to put the make on me, I refused and he said I was on drugs. He made me take all these tests which I passed, and now you guys don't use us anymore.

"After the letter they booked us a couple more times. That was just the way of keeping things hush-hush. Up until this happened they were using us steadily about ten times a month."

Lord Littlebrook added, "This is how mean these bastards can be, and how you can knock a little guy out of a living because he won't play your dirty damn games. I don't believe this bullshit. This is a very vicious business. When you think that one damn perverted son-of-a-bitch can control so many people's lives, it's unbelievable. And what is also unbelievable is that the man in power let's it happen."

"There are many names that used to work for the WWF that aren't there no more," adds Duke. "If you stopped to think about it, they don't play the game - they get let go."

Littlebrook continued, "Pat Patterson has hurt many people. I'm not just talking about jobbers, I'm talking about damned good professional wrestlers that had the talent, the ability, and every damned thing. If you're not in that little click, if you don't blend in, they don't give a shit how good you are. If the man's got the pencil (the booker) he's the man who says yes or no. It's just that damn simple."

"I'll tell you how bad it is for us guys. He (Karate Kid) had a good damn job. This kid is one of the best in the business. I've had him everywhere. I've had him all over the world and he's one of the best in the damn business. He's young, he's got a hell of a body, he still trains in the gym everyday, and he has to go to a damn job selling things over the phone because he can't even get booked on account of this bull that's going on in the business."

Littlebrook ended by saying, "I expect to get some phone calls when they read this, but I don't give a damn. What I'm telling you is the truth, and if they don't like it they can all kiss my ass, every damn one of them."



GOOD THINGS COME IN SMALL PACKAGES

by VINCE RUSSO

Over the past few weeks I have tried to hide in a corner and not get involved with the alleged scandals concerning the WWF. I am in no way qualified to try and dissect the allegations concerning Vince McMahon and his \$1.7 billion empire. I respect the job my colleagues John Arezzi and Dave Meltzer are doing and at this point I can only sit back and learn.

I have tried to stay "inside" the ring. My enjoyment comes when I interview the ring veterans, pick apart the various wrestling television shows, and report on my progress in my attempt to become a professional wrestling manager. I do, at times, express a strong opinion when I see certain aspects of professional wrestling that could have a negative impact on children. To me, that is serious. Wrestling is viewed by millions of children and it is the children I am trying to protect.

Even though I have tried to avoid this current situation, there is one aspect of this story that has really affected me. I feel a special closeness to the Karate Kid and Lord Littlebrook. Their story has touched me deeply (see "The Midgets Stand Tall" in this issue). Whether it is true (and I do believe it is) or false that isn't the issue here. We can't turn back time. We can't erase what has already taken place. What we can do is correct the current situation.

I want my children to enjoy midget wrestling as I did as a child. It was a special treat for me. I remember my entire family sitting by the TV watching the midgets and rolling with laughter. It was something we always looked forward to.

Supposedly the evils of the WWF are now gone. If so be, let's start anew. Let's bring midget wrestling back to the WWF. Let's not just talk about trying to correct our mistakes from the past, let's act on it. Let's bring back a part of professional wrestling that has been absent for almost some five years. The WWF concentrates so much on the kids -- toys, posters, hats, shirts, video games, sleeping bags, Matilda, Frankie, the list goes on and on. How can a commodity as hot as midget wrestling be overlooked by the WWF -- especially for the enjoyment of children. Let's can the snake biting, the woman slapping, and the satanic speeches. Let's bring back Little Beaver, The Haiti Kid, Sky Low Low, The Karate Kid, and Lord Littlebrook.

Mr. Vince McMahon, Jr., whether you are guilty or innocent is of no interest to me. I only hope that you find it in your heart to do the right thing for the children of this country. Wholesome family entertainment is not a speech by Jake Roberts, it is King Kong Bundy body slamming Little Beaver.

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW SIR OLIVER HUMPERDINK

PRO WRESTLING SPOTLIGHT WEEKLY: Tell me about your start in professional wrestling.

SIR OLIVER HUMPERDINK: I got started a long time ago. I used to set up the ring for the old AWA territory back in Minneapolis in the late '60s. I had an opportunity to go to Montreal in '73 with the Hollywood Blondes to manage them.

PWSW: What made you decide on managing early in your career?

OH: I never had the physical attributes to compete, but I had the looks and everything for the manager part.

PWSW: As a manager, did you go through similar training as a wrestler would?

OH: No sir. It was trial by fire.

PWSW: Let's get back to your career.

OH: I worked in Montreal with the Hollywood Blondes, it was called Grand Prix Wrestling. It was when Mad Dog and Butcher Vachone, and all those guys were up in Montreal. From there in 1974 we went to Florida for the Eddie Graham NWA promotion. We then went to L.A. and worked for Mike LeBell. After that it was the mid-south, Bill Watts territory, Oklahoma, Louisiana. We then came back to Florida from 1977 to 1981. The Blondes and I then broke up, I stayed in Florida and worked a little longer. Then I went to the mid-atlantic area for Jim Crockett. From there I did a little thing in Kansas City for Harley Race and Bob Geigel. Then I went back to Florida.

PWSW: You had a brief stint in the WWF, is that correct?

OH: Yes, with Bam Bam Bigelow. We were there for about a year.

PWSW: Let's talk about that. When Bigelow came in he was given a tremendous push, what were the circumstances leading to his leaving the WWF so quickly?

OH: It was just a difference of opinion. Creative differences.

PWSW: From the WWF, where did you go?

OH: I went back to WCW after Crockett sold it to Turner. I worked with the Samoans in Atlanta, and also Bigelow for a time.

PWSW: Where are you working now?

OH: I do a lot of work in the Caribbean. I just got back from Jamaica last week, I was there doing a few shows. We do work in the Bahamas, Antigua, and different islands.

PWSW: What are some highlights of your career?

OH: I've had so many opportunities to work with the greats of the wrestling business. From Jack Brisco to Dory Funk and Harley Race, all the classic wrestlers. I've had a chance to do a lot of traveling and meet some great people. Winning a championship or something like that I don't count. I think just the people that I had a chance to be around and learn from, which is something you don't find too much anymore today.

PWSW: How has the wrestling business managed to get so far away from the art and the sport of wrestling.

OH: As far as the steroids and the sexual harassment, wrestling is just a microcosm of society. It reflects what's going on out there. I don't think wrestling is beyond being affected by it. It's very unfortunate that

the wrestling business today is under such scrutiny and under such a microscope, but that's the way Vince McMahon and TBS want to have it, so they have to pay the price when it's observed. They elevated it to that level.

PWSW: What does the future of professional wrestling hold?

OH: I try to figure out like everybody else what's going to happen. There's just no way of saying -- without a doubt this is going to happen. I kind of see it going back to a more regional basis. Lots of the guys are tired of traveling and I know when I was working for Vince we did lots of traveling, and would only be home a couple of times a month for a few days. There's not many guys I know that wouldn't appreciate getting home a couple of nights, or five nights a week. It will depend on how well everybody weathers the present situation.

PWSW: I currently am training to become a wrestling manager, what advice could you give me?

OH: If you think it's a way to make lots of money fast, it's not. It takes a lot of hard work, a lot of dedication, and long hours. Because you see it on TV for six or seven hours a week, you figure that's all they do, but there's much more to it. I would just say to somebody who wants to get involved, make sure you have something else to fall back on, because you never know.

PWSW: Once you started managing ringside, did you have a desire to be in that ring?

OH: I did, and I have been. I wrestled quite a few times over the years, always with a big gorilla over in my corner. Actually, I've been very, very happy being a manager. When I was a kid I dreamed about being in pro wrestling, and I never thought I'd get a chance, just to be involved to the extent that I have been has really made by goal. Getting in and wrestling every night was never that important to me as long as I could be around it. It's been a great business for me, it's just hard to see it take the course that it is taking. I think it's a giant circle, and the pendulum is about to swing the other way.

BOOB TUBE BASHINGS & BRAVOS

by VINCE RUSSO

MARCH 9-15

WWF

This week the WWF, which may soon stand for the World's Worst Federation, had nothing to offer with the exception of **Sid Justice** pummeling **Virgil**.

Here's an example of very bad business: Junior refused to pay a salary increase to the **Ultimate Warrior**, yet, he adds **Harvey Wippleman** to the payroll who has absolutely nothing to offer the WWF. Boy oh boy, **British Bulldog** vs. **The Bezerker**, **Tatanka** vs. **Rick Martel** and **Owen Hart** vs. **Skinner** all at **Wrestlemania VIII**? I don't know how I'm going to be able to sleep at night.

WCW

Hey **Dusty**, Baby, when's the last time you put **Cactus** over on TV?

In a very entertaining moment, **Madusa** pulled off her

pants and proceeded to karate kick a jobber.

The announcing team of the '90s was introduced, **Jim Ross** and...you got it, **Cactus Jack**.

Brian Pillman pinned **Ricky Morton** in an excellent bout.

The match of the week had to be **Steve Austin** vs. **Scott Steiner**. After end to end crippling action, Scott delivered a "Frankensteiner" to Stunning Steve. Before Steiner could pin Austin, **Arn Anderson** and **Bobby Eaton** made the save. **Brother Rick** entered the scene and we soon had a free for all.

The Freebirds did an anti-steroid announcement.

With victories over **Ricky Morton** and **Tracy Smothers**, my man, the **BADD** man is next in line for a title shot against **Brian Pillman**.

GLOBAL

The Point/Counter-Point segment is silly, and unnecessary.

Bruce Pritchard's "Rowdy Roddy Piper" act is really getting pathetic.

I wish to never again see a match were the loser is forced to kiss someone's feet. **Hot Stuff Eddie Gilbert** kissing the feet of **Bruce Prichard** was totally ridiculous.

Boni Blackstone and **Joe Pedicino** are excellent at their craft.

MARCH 16-22

WCW

Nikita Koloff is back. In an interview he tells us he is here to "talk" to a certain someone. However, Koloff is unclear who that someone is.

I've always been a fan of **Nikita Koloff**. Who could ever forget him screaming **MAGUM TA** during interviews when he and **Terry Allen** were at war.

Following a **Stinger** victory, **Big Van Vader** came from the locker room to deliver the champion: A power slam from the top rope, a **Vader Bomb**, a steel chair, and a swan dive from the second rope -- all in that order. Needles to say, **Sting** had to be scraped off the mat.

This week **Missy Hyatt** sported a lovely wig, but even a lovelier blue halter top.

Paul E and **Medusa** argued on the outside of the ring during a match. **Medusa** may soon be on her way out as the **Dangerous Alliance** has been trying to get rid of her for some time now.

Ricky Steamboat pummelled **Arn Anderson**, **Paul E**. **Dangerously** and **Rick Rude**.

Scotty Flamingo is introduced.

Another miscalculation by **Medusa** caused **Beautiful Bobby** and **Larry Zbyszko** to lose to **The Steiners**.

The quote of the week goes to **Medusa**, "Missy Hyatt, you brought a lot more to the Commission than your credentials, just ask **Jim Ross**." That line deserves one big HmMMM.

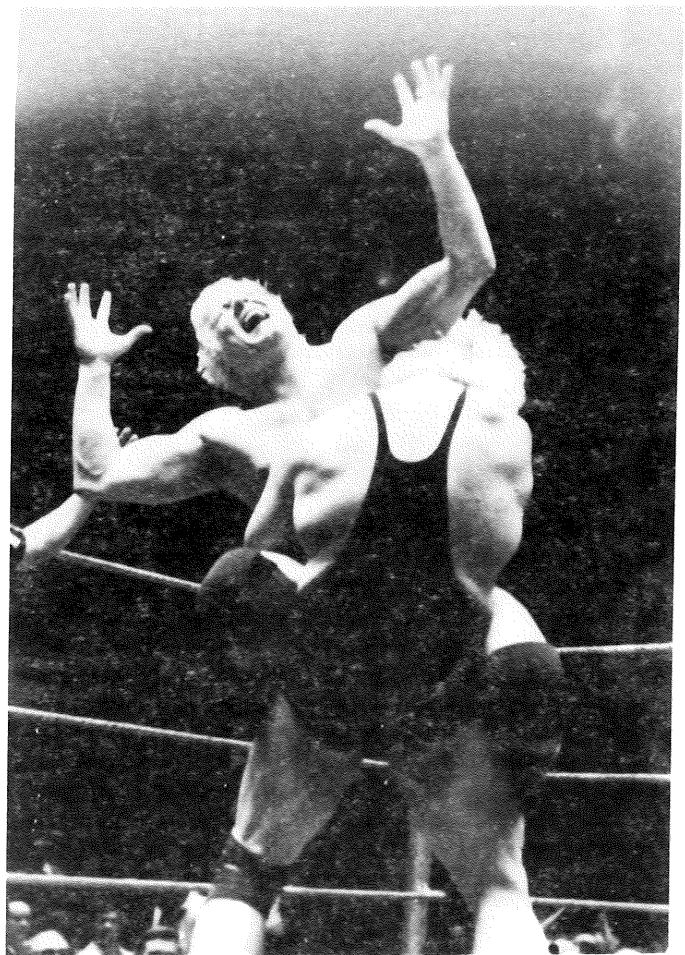
WWF

Vince McMahon and **Mr. Perfect** openly discussed that fact that **Wrestlemania VIII** may be **Hulk Hogan's** last match in the **WWF**.

Tatanka and **Rick Martell** went at it in the runway, as **Tatanka** was entering, and **Martell** was exiting the ring.

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Correctly identify the two wrestlers in this photo below. Three winners will be selected at random from the correct answers. The winners will receive a selection of wrestling prizes.



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The winners of contest #2 identifying **Peter Sanchez** and **Manual Soto** were:

Georgiann Makropolous, Astoria, New York
David J. Steele, Catasauqua, Pennsylvania
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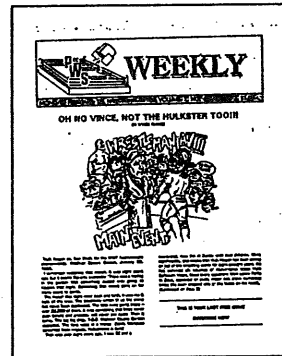
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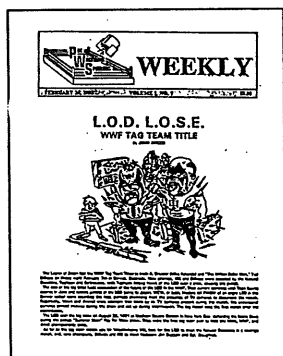
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FLORIDA WRESTLING TEN YEARS APART

by STEPHEN MEYERSON

One of the highlights of my 1977 Florida vacation was seeing the Florida promotion three times:

Tuesday, 8/2/77 - About 4,000 people crowded into the Fort Hesterly Armory in Tampa for the weekly house show. The main event was NWA Champ Harley Race defending the belt against top contender Jack Brisco. I didn't have a noise meter, but the match must have gotten heat since the crowd was on its feet the last ten minutes of the match. Brisco "almost" made Race submit several times with the figure 4 leglock.

Saturday, 8/6/77 - The Lakeland Civic Center was about half full (4,000 estimated) for a main event featuring Dusty Rhodes in a tag match.

Friday, 8/12/77 - The well booked main event, at the almost full Bayfront Center in St. Petersburg (8,000 estimated), featured Race defending against Florida superbabyface Rhodes. It ended with Dusty pinning Race and celebrating in the ring with the other babyfaces. We noticed that Dusty had his feet on the ropes during the 3-count and speculated on the way home about whether the decision would be upheld.

Saturday morning, 8/13/77 - When we turned on Channel 44 in Tampa the following morning, we were informed by Championship Wrestling from Florida host Gordon Solie that the decision was reversed and the belt still belonged to Race. Would there be an immediate rematch? No, since Race had already left Florida to defend his belt in another part of the vast NWA territory.

Comments - 1) the Key players in the successful Florida promotion were booker Eddie Graham, lead babyface (Florida title) Dusty Rhodes, and announcer Gordon Solie who hosted both of the weekly 1-hour shows (Championship Wrestling from Florida and Southern Pro Wrestling).

2) I remember thinking at the time that Dusty didn't fit the mold of what a champion should be. At that time, the three major champs were Race (NWA), Verne Gagne (AWA), and Bruno Sammartino (WWWF), who all had a hard-nosed, serious, traditional presence. Rhodes, even then, was more of a gimmick act featuring Muhammed Ali-like interviews. Nevertheless, Dusty did eventually win the NWA belt and hold it for a significant time span.

3) Some of the house show matches were filmed for TV. If a particular match was being filmed, you expected an upcoming angle.

4) At the Tampa show, Don Muraco returned from a three-week "neck injury" and got revenge on Russian heel Ivan Koloff by interfering in the Koloff vs. Jerry Brisco match. Super heat by the flag waving/red baiting crowd would not be an exaggeration. During the match, Muraco stood on a balcony overlooking the ring. Some in the crowd were imitating Price is Right announcer Johnny Olson saying, "Don Muraco. Come on down!"

5) In Lakeland, heel Tony Marino was eyeing an attractive woman who was heckling him. About halfway through the match, he realized she was a true believer who sincerely wanted him to change his tactics.

6) In Tampa, Dusty won a Texas Bullrope match over Buddy Wolf by tying the rope with the cowbell in the middle around Buddy's waist eight times as the crowd

counted with Dusty. Both bladed.

7) That summer Dusty was working in a mask and calling himself Uvalde Slim. The gimmick was even more obvious than the Yellow Dog. It was intentional since "Big Dust" was the main draw.

8) Saying that Dusty was the lead face in Florida is like saying Carl Lewis was the best long jumper in the '80s or Sergei Bubka is the best pole vaulter. It was that obvious.

9) You've got to admire former NWA champs like Race who traveled long distances alone and worked lengthy main event matches against different opponents in different cities. What a grind and so much responsibility for one man.

I returned to Florida in February of 1987 and a lot had changed in ten years. Instead of main events featuring Race, Brisco, Rhodes, Koloff, Muraco, Ladd, etc., the lead guys wee Shepherders, Scott, Hall, New Breed, Bad News Allen, Oliver Humperdink, Kevin Sullivan, etc. Dusty was no longer in Florida as he was booker and lead babyface for Jim Crockett. It was a dying promotion ripe for a buyout, and it was later bought out by Crockett's NWA.

While there I saw an interesting show including guest wrestlers from the Continental Wrestling Federation (CEF) such as Ron Fuller and Adrian Street, with his manager Miss Linda, doing an effeminate act. The special guest was Bruiser Brody who worked the main event with Kevin Sullivan. Since Sullivan (booker) was talking to the cameraman before the match and pointing at locations in the stands, and considering who the participants were, it wasn't surprising the match wound up 20 rows into the stands. As Brody ran back to the ring, I was standing on my second row chair. Surprisingly, Brody pushed me lightly in the stomach with his huge right hand, I lost my balance and had to jump off the chair. I landed on my feet unharmed. I never expected my first "fan bump."

I also saw a weekly TV taping at the Sportatorium, an oversized log cabin with two rows of seats. When Scott Hall (Diamond Stud) took a bump and was flat on his back outside the ring, I had to tuck my feet in to avoid kicking him in the ribs. I was told that at one time first row was priced at \$5 and second row at \$3.

The best feud was Shepherders vs. New Breed. The Shepherders in Florida were fine heels who were great on interviews ("Ya bleddy Yanks"). They're being wasted in their Bushwacker roles. The New Breed showed great potential in the ring and on interviews using a "2002" gimmick. The New Breed never made it big. Sean Royal left the wrestling business and Chris Champion became best known for problems with law enforcement concerning sex with minors.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

BARKING BERZERKER

A while back, I read a short feature article entitled the "Barking Berzerker" in one of the WWF magazines. I thought that the article missed the mark with respect to giving the fans a little more insight into the character of the man. In truth, he doesn't "Bark," he actually "Husses," as we all know.

I heard, from a very reliable source, that his obsession with "Huss" extends beyond the wrestling ring, a indicated in the following personal capsule of "The Berzerker."

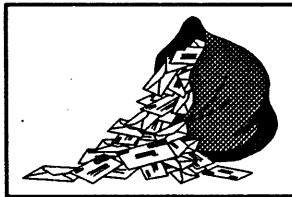
●**Favorite Food:** Corn - it comes off the HUSSSk!

●**Favorite After-Shave:** (The last time he used this, he was only a little disturbed, not totally berserk!) English Leather - it's made from MUSSSk!

●**Favorite Time of Day:** Those few moments before sunset - also known as DUSSSk!

●**Favorite Town:** Chief Jay Strongbow's hometown - PawHUSSSka, Oklahoma.

●**Favorite football game:** University of Washington HUSSSkies vs University of Nebraska CornHUSSSkers!
Pete Theophall ("Pete from Eatontown")
Eatontown, NJ



MAKE OR BREAK

All of the major newsletters are stating that the next few weeks will be the "make or break" period for wrestling, in particular the WWF.

With the constantly new revelations coming forward each day, the WWF is fast becoming the granddaddy of soap operas.

The latest revelation concerns the allegations of child sex abuse by major figures within the WWF. These, indeed are serious charges and must be examined thoroughly before a verdict can be rendered. However, based upon what we have read, the early indications are not encouraging for the WWF.

In the past, it was always the attitude of "Don't worry, it will blow over." I personally think the wind has stopped blowing in Titanville.

Wrestlemania VIII is coming April 5th, but for Vince McMahon if events don't simmer down, Wrestlemania could well be the last chapter of the book on the once mighty WWF.

Steve Tobkes

West Hempstead, NY

GOOD VS. BAD

I just read the article in issue #9 on the Natural Disasters turning into fan favorites. That's just great! Now, all of a sudden the fans are going to start cheering for them. Why is it so important to fans whether a wrestler is a "good guy" or a "bad guy?" Wrestlers like Repo Man don't really go out every night and steal cars. Jake Roberts doesn't go around letting his snake bite people.

Wrestlers should be judged on their skill. Many of my favorite wrestlers are rule breakers like Curt Hennig, Jake

Roberts, Ric Flair, and Rick Rude. I never liked Sgt. Slaughter. I still don't like him. Who cares if he is a fan favorite? I have always liked the Undertaker. Yes, even when he was a heel.

Last month I was at Madison Square Garden. The fans around me couldn't believe I was rooting for the Nasty Boys to beat the Bushwhackers. I'm not a big fan of the Nasty Boys but I root for anyone who wrestles the Bushwhackers. How can you like those two jerks? So fans, don't let Vince McMahon or any other promoter decide who you root for. Forget about who's "bad" and who's "good."

Joseph Puccio

Richmond Hill, NY

WRESTLING RADIO RUMBLINGS

by DONNY LAIBLE

WRESTLE RADIO

HOSTS: DAN REILY, TOM BURKE

WHERE: WNNZ - AM640 (50,000 WATTS) Springfield, Massachusetts

WHEN: SATURDAYS, NOON-1PM

CALL IN LINES: 413-568-6400 (local) or 1-800-736-4640

Wrestling fans in western Massachusetts, Vermont and northern Connecticut, including Hartford, are treated to a fun hour of wrestling talk each Saturday. And I do mean fun. The enthusiastic attitude of Wrestle Radio hosts Dan Reily and Tom Burke make their weekly hour chats an easy listen. Reily, the show's pilot comes from a radio background. His voice and delivery combined with well written and presented news items clearly establish Dan as an authority on the sport.

Tom's timely comments allow his partner to take well deserved breaths. Rundowns of Pay Per View events, hard news stories as the ever widening steroid scandal, plus results from shows both attended live fit into Wrestle Radio's format. Taking callers is an important part of the show. No subjects seem off limits for discussion. Always honest, yet still leaving some guesswork to their listener's imagination, Dan and Tom have been re-educating the show's audience for nearly a year since going on the air.

Wrestle Radio lets the fans in their region know that there is more to wrestling than what is told by promotions during their TV shows. Dan reads nearly all newsletters printed, collects autographs and is a person you must sit next to during a WWF arena show. His comments will have you laughing continuously. Among the guests that have appeared on Wrestle Radio were Billy Graham, Norman, Jim Cornette and Owen Hart.

For information on Wrestle Radio and obtaining tapes: Dan Reily, PO Box 3336, Enfield, CT 06082.

**SEND YOUR LETTERS
TO THE EDITOR...TODAY**

THE WRESTLING MENU

by **DONNY LAIBLE**

Howdy, gang. Let's start things off with a name game quiz. I'll supply you with an individual's ring name, you rack your brain trying to come up with their real name. Billy "Red" Lyons, Whipper Watson, and Sky Low Low. Okay, the sand has begun running through the hour glass. Get those thinking masks on.

While on the subject of names used in the ring, here's a few I came across recently that hopefully you'll find as interesting as I have. Angelo Poffo ("Macho Man's" dad) wrestled under a mask as The Question Mark. Dory Funk, Sr., Dr. Jerry Graham and Bob Orton, Sr. all took part in ring action under the billing El Lobo, and in 1961 Freddie Blassie teamed with Larry Blaine as The Masked Marvels.

Finally, to close out this section on hooded heels, while wrestling out of the NWA's Los Angeles office Greg Valentine in 1974 worked under the identity of Hiroshima Joe. Now that you've finished your first class of the day at Wrestling High - take a break, smoke them if you have them.

Call me sentimental but I'd like to see Jerry Lawler working for WCW. I'm sure he'd like one more run on the big-time level, too....Fantastic's Bobby Fulton has to be one of the most motivated guys in wrestling. Between tours for All-Japan, setting up shows in Ohio and North Carolina, and operating a school with Ivan Koloff in the Charlotte area - he still remains enthused about his craft just as when he was a kid growing up fantasizing about becoming a pro. The Sheik is his all-time favorite wrestler.

Let me ask you, does the WretleMania line-up come across as just another house show? I've always been and always will be a fan of Rick Flair's but his role with the WWF these days is tough to swallow. The belt is meaningless and he's just another act...Hey, will someone put a bug in K. Allen Frey's ear to match Missy Hyatt and Madusa in a Thunderdome match - now that would be brutal.

Congrats to Koko Ware on capturing the USWA heavy-weight crown...One match that caught my attention in looking over the March 2 Mid-South Coliseum card was Tom Pritchard vs. Death. Now, let me get this straight - if Tom defeats Death then a) he will be billed as the Immortal Tom Pritchard, b) he would be qualified to team with the Undertaker, and c) Tom would be well within his rights to sue Titan Sports on copyright infringing of the billing Immortal!

If you were one of those who chucked flash cubes at Vincenti "Bull" Pomentti in the ring - go to the chalkboard and write 100 times The Ultimate Warrior is a better athlete than Frank Gotch ever was...Jeff "TKO" Gaylord may want to pursue a boxing match with Paul Roma since he's got a lightning quick suckerpunch. Scratch that idea - he would have to be man enough to face his opponent first...Larry Winters getting rave reviews in the Philly area for his creativeness in steering Eastern Championship Wrestling.

Back to the name game. "Red" Lyons real name is William Snip, "Whipper" Watson is William Potts and my main man Sky Low Low's official name is Marcel Gauthier. Has anyone located this guy for me yet?

The Wrestling Observer is published weekly by Dave

Meltzer, PO Box 1228, Campbell, CA 95009-1228. A four issue set runs \$6.00...The Heat Sheet Vol. #1 has finally come off the presses.\$2.25 is what Tim Harshman, PO Box 186, Warren, Ohio 44482-0186 charges for his bi-monthly publication. Profiles on Cactus Jack, Brandi Mae, plus over 40 champions from various independent promotions are listed, along with 11 divisional rankings are offered. Top quality picture add to making this the newsletter to watch grow.

Wrestling's Then and Now's first annual is ready for your collection of great pieces of wrestling literature. It's 50 pages of chronicling the Great Territories. Publisher Evan Ginzburg tells us the \$7.00 buy is packed with clippings, art, articles, interviews and title histories. Write to - P.O. Box 471, Oakland Gardens Station, Flushing, NY 11364. The Matwatch annual is also available from Steve Beverly of 16 Robinhood Lane, Jackson, TN 38305 for \$10.00.

Pro Wrestling Torch Weekly editor Wade Keller, PO Box 201844, Minneapolis, MN 55420 is selling his 1991 Torch Yearbook at \$10.00 a copy. Torch Weekly can be picked up at 4 issues for \$5.00. Regional news, interviews and letters to the editor are a sampling of what you'll find in every issue. Want to try a copy of The Voice of the Mat? Simply contact Kenny Levitt, 4310 Beach 43 St., Brooklyn, NY 11224...Received my first sampling of The Legdrop this week. The March 9 issue has an explosive interview with Bruno Sammartino. Mike Sawyer, 831 Pasadena Ave, Niagara Falls, NY 14304 is who to send \$5.00 for 5 issues to. The Legdrop info line is 716-283-1773.

Tom Casola, former host of the Who's Slamming Who radio show has traded his mic for a pair of boots and trunks., Besides wrestling, Tom now trains aspiring wrestlers along with Mike Masters and Gino Caruso. Call 201-299-0602 or write Casola at: 87A N. Beverwyck Rd., Lake Hiawatha, NJ 07034 for details. Tell him you read about his program in the PWSW for a discount.

Jeff Mullins edits Pro Wrestling Sushi - PO Box 36189, San Jose, CA 95158...a sample copy is \$1.50. Jody Boyns puts out the New England Wrestling Scene - 521 Pine St., Apt. 304, Manchester, NH 03104 - write for a free sample issue.

Let me hear from you - Donny Laible, PO Box 443, Iilon, NY 13357.

VIDEO REVIEW

BEST OF JUSHIN THUNDER LIGER
ROB FEINSTEIN PRODUCTIONS

\$20.00

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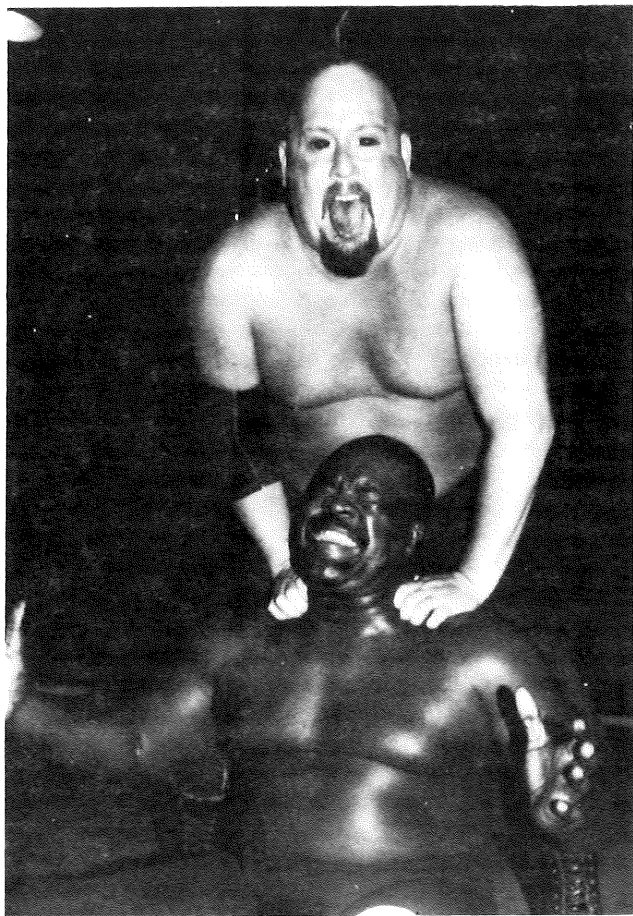
Look up in the sky, it's a bird, it's a plane, it's Jushin Thunder Liger. Watch this Japanese sensation fly through the air with the greatest of ease in this video tape filled with four hours of non-stop action.

In this tape of 20 matches we witness Liger in action against top American stars such as: Big Van Vader, the late Buzz Sawyer, Manny Fernandez, Owen Hart, Pat Tanaka, and Bam Bam Bigelow.

This tape is a must see for true wrestling fans as it not only captures the acrobatics of Liger, but also some of the top Japanese wrestlers in the world.

SPOTLIGHT CAPSULE THE MONGOLIAN MAULER

by DONNY LAIBLE



THE MONGOLIAN MAULER (PETER MILLER)
AGE: 30 HEIGHT: 6'2" WEIGHT: 303 LBS
HOMETOWN: ROCHESTER, NEW YORK
YEARS AS A PRO: 14

How many times do you complain to friends or yourself when no one else is around, why is there a lack of fresh talent coming in to the big two American promotions (WCW, WWF)? As best as I can figure, whoever is doing the looking isn't doing a thorough job. Hey -- talent coordinators, here's a pitch for a fellow who has paid his dues, and then some -- The Mongolian Mauler.

Billed as being from Ulabator, Mongolia, without a doubt the Mauler is the single most traveled wrestler -- worldwide. Since his pro debut as a teenager in Rochester, New York for promoter Roger Reed opposite Julio Augusta in the late 1970's, the Mauler has hustled his ring talents to 27 countries. In 1991 he worked in 19 countries alone. South Africa, Germany, England and Mexico are only the beginning of an impressive travel agenda the Mauler tours routinely. Abdullah the Butcher has always been the Mauler's idol (by now, you must have gathered Mongolia's finest is a heel) and when asked who he has worked with that has given him the most trouble in the ring -- Germany's version of Dusty Rhodes -- Otto Wanz holds that distinction.

Among the many friends and acquaintances the Mauler

has made in the business, England's Marc "Rollerball" Rocco and Owen Hart top the list. Mexico remains his least favorite place to hit the ring, mainly due to office politics. Since returning to the States in hopes of landing a spot with WCW or the WWF, matches with Koko B. Ware and The Junk Yard Dog along with other independent bookings have kept the Mauler busy. In December 1990 a try-out with the WWF came about in Tampa, Florida where he was put over in two appearances.

The Mauler truly is as big a fan of his craft as readers of the SPOTLIGHT. He deserves a break, we'll keep you posted on his progress. Anyone wishing to contact The Mongolian Mauler about his career or caps, photos and T-shirts he offers, may do so by writing: PO Box 337, Murfreesboro, TN 37133-0337.

KEEP AN EYE ON SABU

From: Bombay, India

Height: 5'10"

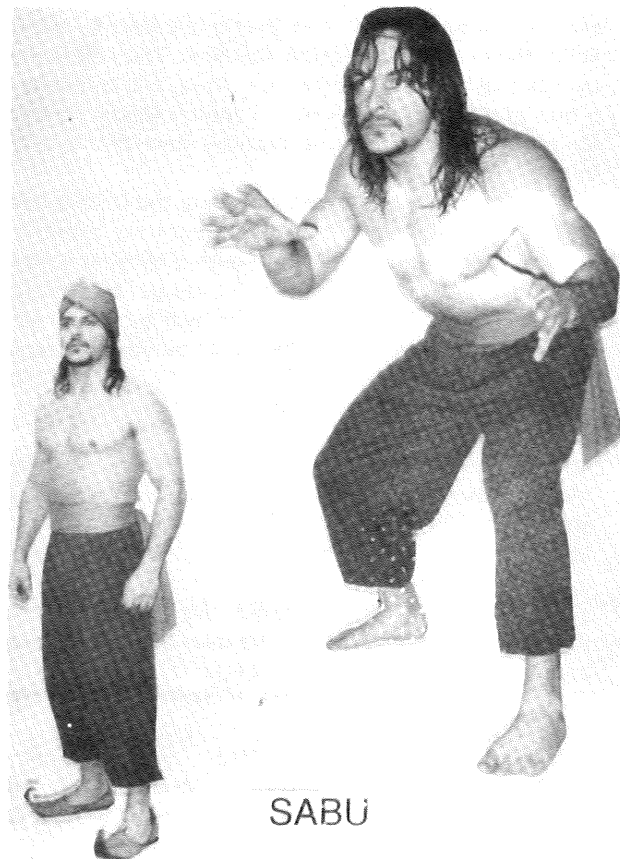
Weight: 215 lbs.

How many years pro: 6 years

Training: Trained under his uncle - The Original Sheik

Influences: Jimmy Snuka, Flying Fred Curry, The Original Sheik

Top opponents: Tarzan Goto, Asushi Oniati



MEDIA MAULS WWF

THE FOLLOWING ARE REPRINTS FROM VARIOUS PUBLICATIONS ACROSS THE COUNTRY. PWSW THOUGHT WE WOULD EXPAND THIS ISSUE TO INCLUDE THESE ARTICLES FOR YOUR INFORMATION.

TASTE TEST

Reprinted from The Village Voice

March 9, 1992

While the World Wrestling Federation braces for the imminent filing of a lawsuit by an upstate New York family charging sexual abuse of an underage male ring attendant by top WWF officials. **Vince McMahon's** lawyers are already defending against another suit for wrongful termination of employment, filed three weeks ago by 29-year-old **Murray Hodgson**. The action in Stamford, Connecticut, Superior Court also charges sexual harassment by McMahon lieutenant **Pat Patterson**, who resigned last week. Hodgson says he was hired in July 1991 to be a special events announcer on WWF television shows, as well as the voice of the sister World Bodybuilding Federation. In court papers, Hodgson maintains that on July 29, 1991, Patterson approached him and asked, "So you're the new guy?...So what do you taste like?" Hodgson replied, "You've got the wrong guy." Patterson: "Not if you want to keep your job I don't. Think about it." On August 20, Hodgson was dismissed, despite what he claims was praise for his work from his superiors. On August 29, he says he met with McMahon, who explained that he just wasn't the right person for the job. Patterson was waiting for Hodgson when he emerged from McMahon's office. "Wouldn't listen to me, would you?" Patterson allegedly said. Hodgson's attorneys are **Ed Nusbaum** and **Richard McLean**, who represented **David "Dr. D" Shults** when he was sued by ABC's **John Stossell** after Shults slapped Stossell on 20/20 in 1985. (Stossell settled for \$425,000, paid by the WWF). Scandal bibliography update: *People* will run a piece this week about steroid champ **Hulk Hogan's** pratfall from grace, and **Geraldo Rivera's** *Now It Can Be Told* is set with a story on the upstate sexual abuse suit.

SLEAZE NO ILLUSION IN WORLD OF WRESTLING

by JEFF SAVAGE

Reprinted from San Diego Tribune Sports

March 11, 1992

In the world of professional wrestling, all the audience sees is fantasy! Muscular "heroes" with names like Hulk enter the ring to engage in fake but seemingly ferocious battles with "villains" such as Jake the Snake.

Even the World Wrestling Federation -- the organization that virtually controls the quasi-sport -- acknowledges that most of the action is illusion, a form of entertainment that has exploded into a multibillion-dollar business that caters particularly to children.

Indeed, Vince McMahon, owner of the Stamford, Conn. based TitanSports, the parent company of the WWF, has called his wrestling superstars who bound about the ring in Spandex tights "role models for kids everywhere."

Behind the wholesome facade of the WWF are some harsh realities.

- Dozens of former wrestlers and WWF officials say that drug abuse, especially of anabolic steroids, extends from the locker room to the boardroom.

- Wrestlers who aspired to participate in WWF matches and other former employees contend they were subjected to sexual harassment by federation executives. Two high-ranking WWF officials resigned recently after being questioned about the allegations.

"People say, ~Who cares about wrestling? It's fake anyway," said Bruno Sammartino, a professional wrestler for four decades, who sued the WWF for breach of contract in 1983.

"OK, so it's fake. That's not harmful. But what it stands for is horrifying. It's a filthy business, and the tragedy of it all is that parents have no idea."

McMahon refused to be interviewed. His spokesman, Steve Planamenta, denied any illegal activity within the federation.

Sammartino and others say the root of wrestling's problem is the absence of checks and balances within the industry. McMahon functions as commissioner, match promoter, television producer and chief ethicist of the business.

It would be similar to Fay Vincent, commissioner of major-league baseball, owning all the teams, hiring all the players and coordinating all the television coverage.

McMahon has managed to avoid government oversight by successfully arguing before state legislatures that wrestling is entertainment and not a sport.

Children are the biggest customers of the business. Scores of children's toys and vitamins are marketed using images of the stars of professional wrestling.

It's a massive industry. The WWF grossed \$1.7 billion from licensed products in 1990, more than the income from products licensed by either baseball or the National Football League.

And those revenues don't include the money brought in by the WWF's gigantic television syndicate, with more than 300 TV affiliates across North America, it is the largest non-network syndicate in the world.

Though *Sports Illustrated* magazine last year touted the WWF as an organization that had turned a "sleazy pseudo-sport into booming family fun" the Union-Tribune has found numerous indications that the sleaziness remains.

Former WWF employees say the organization is rife with abuse of drugs, particularly steroids, the dangerous muscle-enhancing drug that was uncontrolled by law until

1988.

"Steroids is just the tip of the iceberg," said David "Dr." Shults, a former wrestler who is now a private investigator in Connecticut. "There's cocaine, marijuana, heroin, crack cocaine. It's a walking drugstore."

In 1985, the WWF fired Shults after he had twice struck ABC "20/20" news reporter John Stossel. Shults said he subsequently filed a wrongful-termination suit against the WWF, alleging McMahon had ordered him to hit Stossel.

Drug allegations

Six other former WWF wrestlers interviewed by *The San Diego Union-Tribune* have supported Shults' allegations of drug abuse. These wrestlers say some of the industry's biggest stars and executive has regularly used cocaine.

Though St. Louis police are now downplaying the event, they used narcotics-sniffing dogs to search WWF wrestlers as they entered an arena there on Feb. 14.

"The reason we searched was because I had information that professional wrestlers were carrying cocaine and steroids into the state," said David Doctor, a St. Louis County police detective.

The officers found nothing illegal. Three WWF wrestlers, who requested anonymity, said they were tipped off by WWF officials who had seen officers waiting at the arena.

This month, Kerry Von Erich, who wrestled for the WWF as the "Texas Tornado," was indicted by a Dallas County grand jury on five counts of forging prescriptions for depressants, amphetamines and Valium. The WWF did not suspend him.

Steroid abuse is widespread because the wrestlers use it to build and maintain the muscle bulk that fans adore, some former wrestlers say.

"Steroid abuse is out of control in wrestling" said Superstar Billy Graham, who wrestled for the WWF until 1987. "Everybody takes steroids, because if they don't, they won't be allowed to compete. There are going to be a lot more guys looking like me pretty soon."

Graham was once the WWF champion. But two decades of steroid abuse have left him plagued by liver disease, sterility and bone degeneration that required hip-replacement surgery in 1986. Still, it wasn't until 1989, when he was urinating blood, that he stopped using the drug.

Doctors could freely dispense steroids until 1988. In 1991, federal law made it illegal to possess the muscle-enhancing drug without a prescription.

In addition to the dangerous physical side effects such as those Graham suffered, studies have found that steroid abuse can lead to erratic, sometimes vicious behavior -- known informally as "roid-rage."

The use of steroids within the WWF organization ranges from wrestlers to the top executives.

A Harrisburg, Pa. doctor, who has been convicted of illegally dispensing steroids, admitted in federal court last year that he sold anabolic steroids to WWF superstar Hulk Hogan, McMahon, a bodybuilder himself, and at least four other popular professional wrestlers.

A 6-foot-5, 300 pounds, with long blond hair and a Fu Manchu mustache, Hogan is wrestling's most visible participant. Capitalizing on Hogan's stardom, the WWF

licenses an array of products -- from toys to children's vitamins -- using his name and image.

Testifying on his own behalf at his June drug trial, George Zahorian, a Pennsylvania ringside doctor since 1976, acknowledged that he provided the steroids not as a medical treatment but to pump up the wrestler's physiques.

The doctor confirmed the testimony of wrestlers Rowdy Roddy Piper, Rick Martel, Brian Blair and Dan Spivey that they bought steroids from him to enhance their strength and size.

Under questioning by his attorney, Zahorian revealed that he sold steroids to Spivey "to maintain to a certain degree his body size, his strength and the ability to continue on with his form of "physical endeavor," according to a transcript of Zahorian's testimony.

Zahorian was convicted in June 1991 of 12 felony drug counts, and began serving a three-year federal prison term last month.

When Sammartino returned to the WWF in 1984 as a television announcer, he said, he was shocked at the widespread use of steroids.

"You'd see Dr. Zahorian show up with his suitcase and then you'd see the guys form a line," Sammartino said. "Guys would be in the bathroom injecting each other, I'd find needles in the toilets."

Testing begins

A month after the trial, McMahon called a press conference in which he said he'd used a steroid he'd received from Zahorian only once in the late 1980s, McMahon said the WWF would begin testing wrestlers for steroids.

Since then, no results of the tests have been revealed.

"The results are confidential," WWF spokesman Planamenta said.

Graham contends the testing is a sham.

"How can they do anything?" asked Graham. "(Nearly) every wrestler is on steroids and they can't fire the whole crew."

Terry Funk, a former pro wrestler who now stars on CBS-TV *Tequila and Bonetti*, finds it ironic that WWF wrestlers help market children's vitamins, given the extent of steroid use in the business.

"It's utterly tragic to have Hulk Hogan telling kids to eat their vitamins," Funk said in an interview.

Hogan who promotes "Hulk Hogan Vitamins" for kids, has consistently denied using steroids.

"I've trained for 20 years, two hours a day, to look like I do," Hogan said on the "Arsenio Hall Show" last summer. "But the thing I am not is, I am not a steroid abuser, I do not take steroids."

Reached at his home in Tampa, Fla, last month, Hogan repeated his denial.

Hogan became the WWF champion in 1981 and has held the title on and off ever since.

Shults said that when he became a WWF wrestler, Hogan told him how the then-legal steroids could benefit his career.

"(Hogan) would say, 'David, if you want to get big, you have to take the juice,'" Shults said.

Jesse "The Body" Ventura, a former WWF wrestler and announcer, said he used steroids in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but stopped when he learned of the dangers of the drug.

When he started wrestling for the WWF in 1984, he said, steroid use was widespread.

"The business itself forces guys to take it," Ventura said in an interview. "I couldn't walk into Vince McMahon's office and say 'Change the policy.' He would've changed my policy and left me without a job."

The issue of job security has also been linked to sexual harassment at the WWF.

Professional wrestling is a business in which success is predetermined. Promoters decide who wins and who loses every wrestling match.

Because of that situation, former wrestlers and other employees say, the promoters and top WWF officials are in a position to extort sexual favors.

Murray Hodgson, a former WWF television announcer who was fired in August 1991, filed a lawsuit last month in Connecticut, alleging that his termination was a result of his rejecting a sexual advance by a WWF vice president.

According to documents on file in Connecticut and Hodgson's attorney, Edward Nusbaum, WWF vice president Pat Patterson sought a homosexual encounter with Hodgson last July.

"(Hodgson) was approached by an openly homosexual vice president of the (WWF) who was seeking a homosexual encounter," the documents state.

"My client's response was, 'You've got the wrong guy,'" Nusbaum said. "Mr Patterson said, 'Not if you want to keep your job with us.'"

Reached at his home in Connecticut, Patterson refused to comment on Hodgson's lawsuit.

Five days later TitanSports issued a press release saying that Patterson was resigning because of "unfair media pressure brought on our organization."

The press release also announced that another Titan Sports executive, Terry Garvin, was resigning at the same time, for the same reason.

Hodgson's story is not isolated. At least a dozen former WWF employees have come forward with similar stories of being extorted by top WWF officials for sex.

Wrestlers tell of several WWF executives making advances toward wrestlers, offering pay raises and career advancement in exchange for homosexual favors.

"I got sick of having to rebuff them," said Barry Orton, a wrestler who left the WWF last year after a 14-year career.

Orton recalled an incident that he said occurred while riding through Texas, sitting between two male WWF officials who were grabbing at him. He said he jumped from the car at a service station with his pants ripped open to the knees.

"They wouldn't leave me alone," Orton said.

Graham and wrestler Billy Jack Haynes said sexual harassment by WWF administrators had become "openly ridiculous" by the mid-1980s.

I would watch these WWF men walk into locker rooms and grab wrestlers on the buttocks," Graham said. "It was sexual squeeze, a fondling, a sexual advance.

"The wrestlers don't like it, but what can they do? The put up with it or get demoted."

Allegations of sexual harassment are not confined to adults. Two males said that as adolescents they were sexually molested by WWF employees.

Tom Cole, now 20, started working for the WWF in 1985 as ring boy, a gofer in Yonkers, N.Y., when he was 13 years old.

Cole said that while on tour with the wrestling show a WWF employee would film Cole with a video camera while fondling the boys's feet and masturbating.

"He had a foot fetish," Cole said. "He would play with all the young boys' feet for hours at a time."

Boys propositioned

Chris Loss was 16 when he began working as a \$100-a-night ring boy in Niagara Falls in 1989. He said in an interview that the WWF employee cited by Cole stepped on his foot upon meeting him, and when Loss said his foot hurt, the employee removed the boy's shoe and began rubbing.

"Boys are getting propositioned and played with all the time," Loss said. "you sort of put up with it because you can make a lot of money."

Cole said he was harassed by several WWF employees. He said he was grabbed in the genitals numerous times by another top WWF official, but never said anything because he was scared.

Cole said the sexual harassment continued unabated until he was fired in February 1990 after rebuffing an advance by still another WWF official.

In that incident, Cole said, he was driven to the WWF official's house, where he was asked to smoke marijuana, snort, cocaine and have homosexual sex.

When Cole rejected his advances, the official refused to take him home, Cole said. So Cole slept in the WWF official's van in the driveway. The next day Cole was fired.

"They told me I was no longer needed," Cole said. "I know if I would've slept with those guys, I'd probably be rich right now. It was really sleazy."

Former wrestler Ventura places the blame for such stories squarely on McMahon's shoulders.

"Vince McMahon should be more conscious of what is happening here," Ventura said. "The (WWF's) policy when the media comes down on a issue has been to ignore it and it will go away. Well, I don't think this one will go away."

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BOY-SEX SCANDAL ROCKS WRESTLING

by Phil Mushnick & Michael Shain

Reprinted from New York Post

March 12, 1992

The billion-dollar pro wrestling empire is about to be shaken to its foundations by a teen-boy sex scandal. The Post has learned.

Published reports charge high-ranking officials of the World Wrestling Federation with sexually abusing teenage employees who traveled with performers around the wrestling circuit.

Also, former wrestlers have told The Post that they were expected to have sex with WWF executives if they wanted to get jobs or advance up the ranks.

"Instead of going to a gay bar and picking up someone, these guys got a thrill out of getting to someone they thought was a virgin," said Barry Orton, who wrestled for 14 years in the WWF as Barry "O."

Orton, 33, said he was approached for sexual favors in the mid-1980s by Terry Garvin, the assistant to Pat Patterson, the WWF executive who booked wrestlers for matches.

Patterson and Garvin, both ex-wrestlers, resigned last week from the WWF -- the Stamford, Conn. based firm that has a virtual monopoly in the wrestling business.

The resignations came shortly after The Post reported a lawsuit was in the works charging wrestling executives with sexually abusing a teen-age "ringboy." Ringboys handle equipment and act as go-fers.

"Boys are getting propositioned and played with all the time," Chris Loss, a former ringboy from Buffalo, told the San Diego Union-Tribune yesterday. "You sort of put up with it because you can make a lot of money."

New York lawyer Alan Fuchsberg said yesterday he is representing another ex-ringboy, Tom Cole of Utica, in a possible lawsuit against the WWF.

Repeated phone calls to a WWF spokesman were not returned yesterday. Patterson and Garvin couldn't be reached.

John Arezzi, who hosts a wrestling radio show on WEVD-AM, said Orton's story was not uncommon because "it was easy to intimidate young and unestablished wrestlers."

"More and more of these guys are coming out every day with stories like this."

The latest is ex-wrestler Tom Harkins. In a letter to the California newsletter Wrestling Observer, Harkins this week said Patterson propositioned him in a Los Angeles bar in 1985 after Harkins approached Patterson about getting more work.

When the wrestler said he wasn't interested in a sexual liaison, Patterson "responded by reiterating that I would never work for them in that case and kept his word," Harkins wrote.

The Village Voice reported yesterday that a former WWF ring announcer is suing the federation, claiming he was fired last year for refusing Patterson's advances.

The wrestling world was rocked last year by the conviction of Dr. George Zahorian, a doctor who was sentenced to three years in prison for supplying steroids to top WWF stars.

SEX, LIES AND THE WWF

by PHIL MUSHNICK

Reprinted from New York Post

March 18, 1992

In a world where scandal within legitimate ranks has become an every-day reality, there are many who respond to the staggering tales being reported by men who once served the World Wrestling Federation as tales that are both easily explained and dismissed. After all, we're told, pro wrestling is simply a rogue industry behaving as a rogue industry.

And that's exactly the mindset WWF owner Vince McMahon is banking on. And that's exactly what has empowered his WWF to do to people -- children and adults -- exactly as it wishes, when it wishes, and as often as it wishes. The WWF is power drunk in the knowledge that its autonomy fully enables it to violate every standard of human decency because right-headed humans possess neither the time nor inclination to do anything about any industry they've always viewed with bemused disregard.

Never will you encounter a human more cold-blooded, more devoid of honor and propriety than Vice McMahon, America's foremost TV babysitter. In your wildest, most twisted dreams, you won't meet up with the likes of McMahon, a miscreant so practiced in the art of deception, the half-truth and the bald-faced lie as to make the Artful Dodger appear clumsy.

A George Steinbrenner or a Don King pale by comparison. So help us. Indeed, Hannibal Lecter is the only fictional character who comes close.

After nine months of examining this man's ways and means, let's pick it up Friday night, with McMahon's spin-control appearance on Larry King's CNN show.

Following the conviction in June of Dr. George Zahorian for illegally dispensing steroids and other drugs to WWF stars (including Hulk Hogan), ex-wrestlers, ex-ring announcers and ex-ringboys have been crawling out of the woodwork to report -- on the record -- years of blatant sexual abuse, sexual harassment, pedophilia and drug abuse engaged in and perpetrated by WWF executives, stars and administrators.

So, on Friday night, McMahon appeared on CNN, in full knowledge of this steady stream of charges, and fully expecting a lawsuit from a 21-year-old named Tom Cole, whose corroborated claim is that he was sexually molested and harassed by WWF execs and front-office workers while serving the WWF as an under-aged ring assistant/gofer.

McMahon met the accusations with 30 minutes worth of indignation and unblinking lies. Mel Phillips? The WWF TV ring announcer and road boss named by Cole and another youngster as the man who had recruited them, then sexually abused them? "Mel Phillips has never been an employee of the WWF," McMahon told King with a strident resolve. "To this day -- never been an employee. He is used as an occasional laborer."

Yeah, on the occasions when the WWF is in business. Phillips is well known to the wrestling world as a WWF regular for 10 years or more. Monday, on the Phil Donahue Show, seated among seven of the WWF's accusers, McMahon amended Phillips' history. Phillips, said McMahon, "is not technically an employee, although

he worked with us every day." Oh!

McMahon also told King's national audience that he had "no idea, whatsoever" about any sexual misconduct by employees; not even a hint. Yet, two weeks ago, during pour-his-heart-out phone calls, he told West Coast-based journalist Dave Meltzer, then me, that he had let Phillips go four years ago because Phillips' relationship with kids seemed peculiar and unnatural. McMahon said he re-hired Phillips with the caveat that Phillips steer clear from kids.

McMahon also said that no charges of sexual harassment had ever before been leveled. Baloney! As far back as 1976, Jim Wilson, a former NFL lineman, accused a National Wrestling Alliance exec of blackballing him from the business after refusing the exec's sexual advances. The WWF was a member of the NWA at the time, and Wilson's story and fate is well-known within the wrestling industry. In 1985, Wilson repeated his charge on ABC's "20/20."

McMahon, dripping with sincerity, told King he had begun an internal investigation of all the charges. But later, he said that all the charges were "a bunch of bunk." That's some way to begin an investigation.

McMahon also said that while he accepted the resignations of his right-hand man, Pat Patterson, and Patterson's assistant, Terry Garvin -- ex-wrestlers and WWF execs publicly charged by at least 10 people as having made sexual advances on wrestlers and as having engaged in casting-couch employment practices -- McMahon had the colossal gall to suggest that these execs were victims of America's creeping homophobia.

Good God! Is there anyone with a more complete track record of teaching kids to hate homosexuals than McMahon? All his employees who have accepted ring roles as effeminate wrestlers have been positioned by McMahon as the villains.

Hate has always been a big kiddiesell of McMahon's and hatred for homosexuals has been a steady angle pitched to children. In recent tag-team matches, The Bushwhackers have wrestled the effeminate Beverly Bros. Each time, The Bushwhackers encourage the kids in the audience to chant "faggots" at the Beverlys. This scene, mom and dad, has appeared on the WWF's nationally televised shows.

Finally, Friday, McMahon flatly denied that he was attempting to reach a financial settlement with Cole in an effort to prevent him from filing suit. He said he's trying to reach him solely in an attempt to "get to the bottom" of the charges.

Monday, McMahon appeared on the Donahue show with another altered story. He said the possibility existed that these ugly charges were true, but then, as the show wore on, he fought the charges with the same practiced indignation and heart-clutching outrage seen Friday night.

What wasn't immediately apparent Monday was that Donahue's studio audience included Tom Cole, the kid who McMahon said on CNN Friday he was trying to meet with, but only to hear his charges and not to seek a financial settlement. Cole arrived at the show in the company of WWF employees. Incredibly, Cole had reached an "agreement" with McMahon before Monday's Donahue show.

The conditions of the Cole-McMahon agreement are that Cole will never again be confronted by Phillips,

Garvin or Patterson; that McMahon provide Cole with a multi-year contract to return to his position as a ringboy (a forger with a long-term contract!); and that Cole receive two years back pay. And what's two years back pay for a teen-age ringboy who used to make \$100 a show, working no more than 30 shows per year? Seventy thousand dollars!

Cole's attorney, Alan Fuchsberg, said yesterday that the deal is not a payoff, but rather an agreement because Cole has returned to a job he once loved. Not a payoff, but an agreement? Semantic obfuscation. For \$70,000 plus adding a highly paid ringboy to the payroll, McMahon gets away cheap if it means the preservation of his multi-billion dollar TV and toy empire. Certainly, McMahon bought himself out of what promised to be a devastating lawsuit.

(The WWF still faces an unfair-termination suit filed by former announcer Murray Hodgson, who claims he was fired after rejecting a WWF exec's sexual advances).

Fuchsberg said that McMahon, in an effort to save the WWF, will make a full and sincere admission that the sexual misconduct claims made by Cole are true. Oh, really? Fuchsberg said he saw only the final minutes of Donahue. He didn't know that McMahon, his agreement with Cole already done, had the chance to come clean about Cole's claims, but instead used the Donahue show to continue to try to discredit all the people who had come forward to support Cole's story!

That's how Vince McMahon spent Day 1 as the new, improved, sincere Vince McMahon. Donahue staffers and the panelists, including Bruno Sammartino, Meltzer and Hodgson -- those who had come forward to expose the WWF on the Donahue show -- were appalled to learn that one of the people they had gone to bat for (Cole) had not only been bought off by McMahon, but that the WWF brought him to the show to flaunt him before the whistleblowers' disbelieving eyes. Vintage McMahon.

But most disturbing about Monday's Donahue show was the look on many of the faces of the adults in the audience. They looked amused by it all; as if they were watching a cartoon show and listening to the testimony of make-believe men. A story of midget wrestlers being blackballed from the WWF because one of their own, the Karate Kind, refused the sexual advances of a WWF exec, led to chuckles from the audience.

But if this story had been about the Orioles, or the Packers, or General Electric, no one would be laughing. It would not only be the lead story among every news entity in this land, a Congressional hearing, following a drop-everything FBI investigation, would ensue.

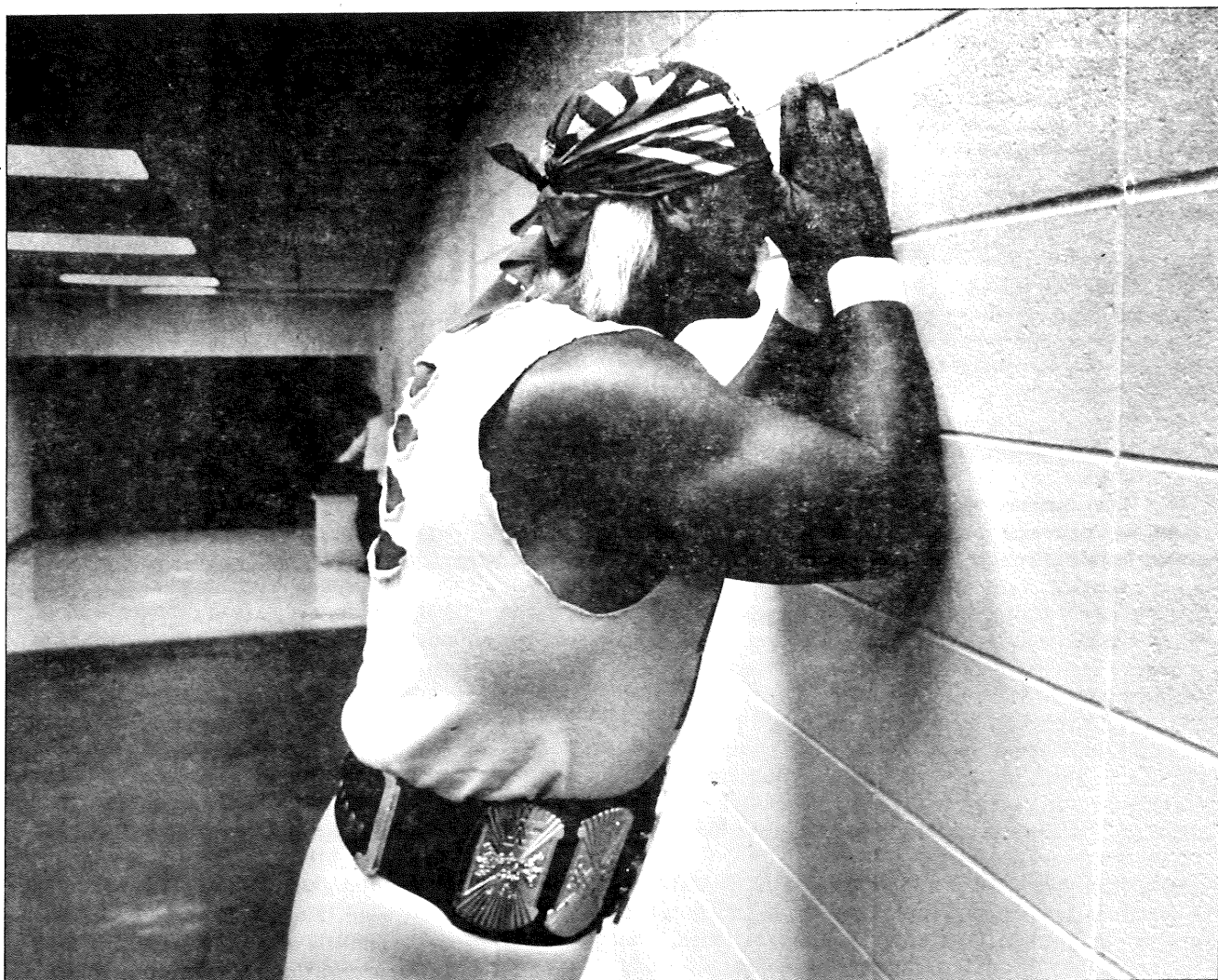
While the WWF's accusers continue to surface on a virtual daily basis, this story must no longer be left to the media to expose. State and federal legislatures must see it through. Federal law-enforcement agencies must act. If the FBI can go after Howard Spira, it can go after the WWF.

But as long as the WWF's real-life horrors are considered a laughing matter, no one's laughing louder than Vince McMahon.

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INCREDIBLE HULK?

Reprinted from People Weekly
March 23, 1992



ACEY HARPER

He is pro wrestling's first million-dollar man: a crossover star of pay-per-view, silver screen and Madison Avenue whose glistening 6'6", 290-lb. physique, intense glare, thinning blond mane and friendly growl have been used to endorse everything from an antiperspirant stick to kids' vitamins.

But now -- *wham! thud! oof!* several of Hulk Hogan's former ring cronies have delivered what, in wrestling terms, amounts to an off-the-turnbuckle clothesline: They claim Hulk, 38, bulked up for years on muscle-inflating steroids and abused other drugs.

Hogan has declined PEOPLE's repeated requests for an interview to address these charges, which threaten to deflate not only his good-guy image, but his King Kong-size earnings as well. (The three-time World Wrestling Federation champion grosses an estimated \$5 million a year, much of it coming from such outside-the-arena enterprises as commercials, toys and movies.)

Hogan's headlock on the public's affections actually began slipping last June, when Dr. George Zahorian III, the attending physician for pro wrestling bouts in south central Pennsylvania, was convicted under a 1988 federal law that outlaws the distribution of steroids for

nontherapeutic purposes. Among the steroid abusers Zahorian named during his testimony was Hogan. Federal Express records produced by government officials show Zahorian sent packages to several dozen wrestlers, including Hogan. Four of them testified that the packages they received contained steroids.

Despite the testimony, Hogan's lawyers managed to quash a subpoena for him to appear at Zahorian's trial, arguing that it would have invaded their client's privacy and threatened his livelihood. After the trial, Hogan denied all, telling talk show host Arsenio Hall, "I am not a steroid abuser." He did admit to injecting steroids briefly in 1983 while under a physician's care for a torn bicep. Hogan gave the same account to PEOPLE last October but added, "It's like putting poison in your body."

Among Hogan's fellow grunt-and-groaners, his public denials of steroid abuse were a stretch even by wrestling's elastic standards. In January, two of his ex-colleagues, Superstar Billy Graham (real name: Eldridge Wayne Coleman), 48, and David Shults, 42, whose wrestling moniker was Dr. D, began making the TV tabloid and radio talk show rounds. While admitting to

being ex-steroid users themselves, they claim Hogan also had more than a passing acquaintance with the synthetic hormone. Graham, a former WWF champ, remembered when Hogan, using his real name, Terry Bollea, was playing bass in a rock band in 1976 and trying, without success, to climb into the ring. At 230 lbs., he was big-but not big enough. he befriended Graham and began asking about steroids. "I saw him a year or two later, and he'd gained at least 80 to 90 lbs.," said Graham, who claims Hogan spoke of tennis ball-size scar tissue on his hips, the result of repeated steroid injections.

"I injected him well over 100 times," says Shults, now a New Haven, Conn.-based bounty hunter for bail bondsmen, who maintains he was introduced to steroids in the late '70s by Hogan, then billed as Terry "the Hulk" Boulder. In exchange, Shults would offer the rookie tips on such things as how to project his ring persona believably in public, while helping him take the drug, which is injected directly into whatever muscles require enlargement. "I regularly gave him shots in the triceps (back of the arms), where he couldn't reach himself, and also a few times in the butt," says the former Dr. D. "Sometimes he took 12 cc's three times a week."

"Hulk always bragged about steroids," says Joe Bednar-ski, who retired from his WWF career as Ivan Putski, the Polish Power, in 1986. "He'd say, 'S--t, I don't cycle (a practice in which users abstain for a while to let the body return to its normal state). I don't get off of them. That's how I say 'over' (popular)."

But his sympathizers think Hulk is being unfairly worked over for using a drug that until recently could be legally obtained by anyone.

"Who didn't do steroids?" says Ken Patera, a former wrestling superstar and 1972 Olympic weight lifter. "The word came down from the promoters, especially (WWF owner Vince) McMahon, that you had to be bigger than life. The only way to do that was to take anabolic steroids."

McMahon, a bodybuilder who has acknowledged experimenting with the anabolic steroid Deca-Durabolin, retorts, "I've never encouraged anyone at any time to take steroids."

But Hogan's drug abuse went beyond steroids according to David Shults. He says Hogan also used cocaine, marijuana, upper and downers. Shults' friend Randy Culler, who wrestled under the names the Assassin and Moondog Rex, confirms: Me and Hogan ran around together. He was real bold about the steroid use. And he also did Placidyl (a sleeping capsule), Quaaludes, cocaine." (So, reportedly, did a lot of others: At least five pro wrestlers have died of drug overdoses in the last decade.) Billy Jack Haynes, a WWF performer from 1986 to 1988, recalls a harrowing car trip to Hogan's Connecticut home with Hulk and two other wrestlers after a bout at Madison Square Garden in 1987. "There was pot, alcohol, pill-popping. Hulk was going 70 m.p.h. on the freeway, stoned out of his gourd," says Haynes. "I got mad at him for driving under the influence. We almost had a fight over it."

"Hogan isn't a bad guy," says Dave Meltzer, publisher of the Wrestling Observer Newsletter. "He works tirelessly for charities, (even) when the cameras aren't around." But by failing to fess up to past steroid use Meltzer

believes, "he revealed himself to be just another carnny con man."

It's an image of Hogan sharply at odds with that of the loving family man (he and wife Linda, 32, have a daughter, Brooke 4, and son, Nicholas, 2) whose name is licensed to sell a popular brand of kids' vitamins. As a result of the steroids scandal, the joke heard in hard-core body-building gyms these days is: "Hulk Hogan Vitamins come in two forms -- orals and injectables." Yet Solaris Marketing Group president Barry Ross, whose company distributes the vitamins, rejects any slurs on Hulk's good name, adding, "We stand by him 100 percent." Although a spokesman for Hasbro (which offers a line of Hulk action toys) would not return PEOPLE's phone calls, the scent of scandal has not persuaded Gillette to cancel Hulk's Right Guard deodorant spots.

Still, the accusations of drug abuse may have already accomplished what WWF opponents Sergeant Slaughter and Andre the Giant could never do: Toss the Hulkster out of the ring -- permanently. As if sensing that his superstar's career is kaput, McMahon is pumping up Hogan's WrestleMania VIII bout against Sid Justice in the Indianapolis Hoosier Dome on April 5 as Hulk's last match before a "hiatus" that McMahon says "could be six months or six years or forever, I don't know."

It is doubtful, though, that any such hiatus will be the end of the Hulk's career. He has a standing offer to wrestle in Japan, where he can take home a six-figure payout for just a few bouts (and where steroid use by wrestlers is relatively uncommon). Still, the price of any such banishment will be felt not so much by the Big Guy as by the little guys -- the legions of Hulkamaniacs not yet 10 years old. Sayonara, Hulk? Say it ain't so.

WWF SEX-HARASS SUIT SETTLED

Reprinted from Daily News

Thursday, March 19, 1992

A worker in the embattled World Wrestling Federation who leveled sex harassment charges against a supervisor has returned to ringside.

Tom Cole, 21, one of several alleged victims of homosexual approaches by WWF executives who have since resigned, agreed Monday to drop any legal action and return to the federation payroll with a promotion and back pay.

Cole, of Yonkers, had charged he was offered a promotion from ring assistant two years ago, then sexually propositioned later that same evening by the supervisor. After rebuffing the advances, he was fired.

Cole will receive a promotion and about \$50,000 in back pay, the Daily News has learned.

A clean dream

Cole's attorney, Alan Fuchsberg of Manhattan, said, "Mr. Cole was snatched out...but only received fair and just compensation."

Fuchsberg added that he perceived "a definite effort" by the WWF "to make the company squeaky-clean from here on in."

Because of the WWF's wide appeal to children, through syndicated Tv shows and toy and vitamin marketing, Fuchsberg said the federation has too much to lose.

Cole's charges were made after allegations by former

wrestlers that two WWF executives, who recently resigned, used "casting couch" threats to wrestlers hoping to be hired or to further their careers in a lucrative business where most matches are scripted entertainment.

Steroids use charged

WWF owner Vince McMahon had earlier responded to the sexual harassment charges by saying the alleged victims should go to "the appropriate authorities to file a formal complaint."

Several former wrestlers also have charged that drug abuse, particularly of body-building anabolic steroids, extends from the locker room to the boardroom.

Dr George Zahorian was sentenced to three years in federal prison last summer for prescribing the illegal steroids to wrestling superstars Hulk Hogan, Roddy Piper -- and to McMahon, a former bodybuilder who admitted he experimented with the drug.

A GLIMPSE OF McMAHON

**Reprinted from Daily Sports News
Friday, March 20, 1992**

To say this week in wrestling has been hectic is like saying it's awfully dry in the desert. The WWF and especially its chief honcho, Vince McMahon, have faced a barrage of allegations and accusations, especially about sexual harassment, that cast a cloud over the organization.

As a matter of fact, just a few days ago one publication said McMahon was comparable to Hannibal Lechter. Well, the silence is broken and the lamb will turn into a lion and speak.

Having been granted a rare interview with McMahon at his headquarters in Xanadu ... er, Stamford, Conn., you may be more accurate in calling him Charles Foster Kane. But that's one man's opinion. Any way, a few days ago McMahon and I sat down to talk about all you ever wanted to know about here WWF but were afraid to ask. However, for today the discussions will focus on his response to the "ring-boy" situation.

If you haven't heard, the situation has been settled. Tom Cole, the young man who leveled charges of sexual harassment within WWF, has agreed to a two-contract to become a member of the ring crew with two years' back pay, dating to when he originally was released. The WWF employee involved -- Mel Phillips -- has tendered his resignation and McMahon has accepted it.

McMahon said, "At no time was a lawsuit by Mr. Cole or any other individual ever filed." He is hoping this will end the matter to everyone's satisfaction. Chances are it won't.

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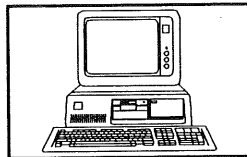
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